

PERS

# PERSPECTIVES

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P. 1

## Is My Life in Balance?

By: Jennifer Shotlander, LCSW, CEAP

Most of us play several roles in our lives, such as employee, spouse, parent, son/daughter, neighbor, friend, citizen, cook, cleaner, coach, advisor, caretaker, chauffeur, etc... Balancing these roles can be difficult and may leave us feeling overwhelmed, stressed, tired, or anxious.

### **What is work-life balance?**

Work-life balance is having a sense of daily achievement and enjoyment in our work and with our family, friends, and self. Achievement refers to feeling successful after putting effort into the completion of a task. Enjoyment is more than just smiles and laughter; it encompasses finding and/or having pride, satisfaction and happiness with the activities in our life.



Flexibility is key to creating a successful work-life balance. It is not realistic or necessary to spend an equal number of hours on each role we play. Plan your time to fit your unique needs. Our lives change daily and so do our work-life balance needs. Our schedules and attitudes need to adapt to the demands of our lives. Successful balance when you are single will probably be different when you marry, have children, change jobs, or retire.

### **Tips to Improve Work-Life Balance**

1. Schedule downtime. Plan to spend time with family and friends regularly in order to reconnect and reenergize yourself. For example, schedule a regular date night with your spouse, Sunday afternoons in the park with your children, and/or schedule a family dinner for every Wednesday evening.
2. Let go of energy drainers. Reduce the amount of time you spend on activities that aren't adding value to your life and that don't align with your personal or work goals. By spending less time listening to others complain, gossiping, surfing the internet, and worrying, you can create more time for self-care and positive activities.

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## **What is the EAP?**

The Employee Assistance Program's (EAP) mission is to ensure the well-being of employees by assisting them in resolving issues that may be adversely impacting work or home. The EAP provides one-on-one problem assessment, short-term counseling, referrals to community resources, and crisis intervention.

In addition to working with you on an individual basis, we conduct a variety of educational workshops and classes. We are frequently asked to speak at employee orientation sessions and offer monthly supervisor training classes.

Visit the EAP website:

[http://  
www.narmc.amedd.army.mil/  
dilorenzo/pers.asp](http://www.narmc.amedd.army.mil/dilorenzo/pers.asp)

(Click on the EAP/PERS tab on the left)

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## ***Raising a Son with Good Character***

By: Nicole Daniels, MS, LCMFT

Parenting can be difficult. Getting the right type of guidance on the subject can be even more daunting. As parents we often wonder...how can we help our children grow into caring, confident, responsible, and emotionally equipped adults? Can raising a son with these qualities be even more difficult? According to gender stereotypes, when it comes to emotions, boys and girls are opposites. Boys shouldn't cry but it's ok for girls to show their emotions. Our culture does not socialize boys to ask for emotional connection and reassurance but to be tough and not cry. Emotional intelligence helps to empower the child to handle emotions appropriately, develop self-awareness and awareness of other's feelings. This article provides some suggestions for raising the type of son who will have success in relationships with family and friends and be a leader in the workplace.

### **Number 1- Parents first!**

Successful parenting always begins with the parent whether raising a boy or girl. There are no magic tricks or complex rules (even if you feel that raising your child and keeping your sanity seems magical). Parenting is based on our deepest feelings of love and affection. It can be demonstrated through empathy, understanding, and patience. Quality parenting starts in our hearts and is most often practiced during times of high emotions – when our children are sad, angry, or scared. The heart of parenting is being there in an emotionally present manner when it really counts.



### **Number 2- Teach Regulation of Emotions**

Teach your son to communicate effectively about his emotions. If it appears that something is bothering your son, do not bombard him with questions. You can say, "I notice you look bothered, I am available to listen and give support". You have now set the stage to allow him to come to you at his own pace. When he shares, make sure that you then validate his feelings and echo what he is saying. He needs to know that you are "safe" to come to with upsetting issues. He will then probably offer even more information, but remember to only offer advice after it appears that he is finished. Since many boys are taught to cover or hide their feelings, getting your son to open up about how he feels is important. Teach him that feelings of sadness, anger, and fear often linger but will go away eventually. Sometimes these feelings hurt us but we do not have to hurt others when we feel that way. Teach him that it is normal to experience both positive and negative feelings.


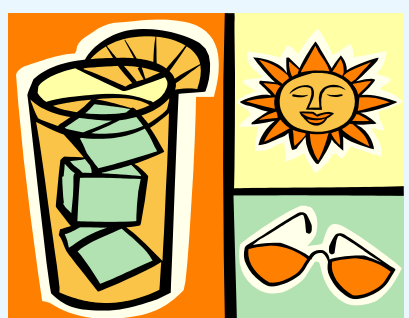
### **Number 3- Model and Teach Empathy**

Empathy is a valuable skill to have throughout our lives, especially for boys. They will grow into men who can succeed as leaders in the workplace and have great marriages. Teaching your son empathy will help him develop better friendships, stay emotionally stable, and lead the way for classroom effectiveness. Empathy will help your son feel for others when they hurt. Playing "what-if" will encourage knowing what it is like to be in the shoes of others. Also, encourage him to read books that are fiction. Understanding how fictional characters may feel uses the same part of the brain that is used to figure out how real people actually feel. Empathy is valuable in a world that can be so confusing and difficult.

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# Upcoming Workshops

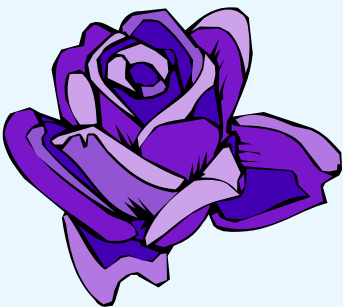
## June 2011

	<p align="center"><b>29</b>  <b>Working Smart</b>  <b>Improving Concentration and Over-</b>  <b>coming Procrastination</b></p> <p align="center">Presented by: Jennifer Shotlander  1:00 – 2:00 PM  Upton Conference Rm. (#219)  DTHC, Pentagon</p>	
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## July 2011

<p align="center"><b>7</b>  <b>Management &amp; Supervisory</b>  <b>Orientation/Training</b>  <b>Seminar</b> (Supervising  Civilian Personnel)</p> <p align="center">Presented by: PERS Staff  9:30 – 11:30 AM  Upton Conference Room,  #219  DTHC, Pentagon</p>	<p align="center"><b>11</b>  <b>Working Smart</b>  <b>Assertive Communication</b>  <b>and Problem Solving</b></p> <p align="center">Presented by:  Jennifer Shotlander  1:00 – 2:00 PM  Upton Conference Room,  #219  DTHC, Pentagon</p>	<p align="center"><b>20</b>  <b>Positive Thinking</b></p> <p align="center">Presented by:  Nicole Daniels  9:30 – 11:30 AM  Upton Conference Room,  #219  DTHC, Pentagon</p>	<p align="center"><b>27</b>  <b>Working Smart</b>  <b>Taking Control of Stress</b></p> <p align="center">Presented by:  Jennifer Shotlander  1:00 – 2:00 PM  Upton Conference Room,  #219  DTHC, Pentagon</p>
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## August 2011

<p align="center"><b>4</b>  <b>Management &amp; Supervisory Orienta-</b>  <b>tion/Training Seminar</b>  (Supervising Civilian Personnel)</p> <p align="center">Presented by: PERS Staff  9:30 – 11:30 AM  Upton Conference Room, #219  DTHC, Pentagon</p>		<p align="center"><b>11</b>  <b>Retirement in Mind</b></p> <p align="center">Presented by : Jane Shea, PhD.  9:30 – 11:30 AM  Upton Conference Room, #219  DTHC, Pentagon</p>
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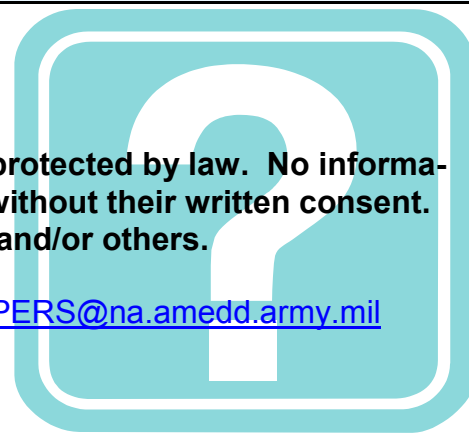
For additional information or to register, call 703-692-8917 or email [PERS@na.amedd.army.mil](mailto:PERS@na.amedd.army.mil)

## Ask The EAP?

**Q:** How confidential is the EAP?

**A:** Client identity and information provided to a counselor is protected by law. No information about clients who make use of the EAP will be disclosed without their written consent. Exceptions are rare and are to ensure the safety of the clients and/or others.

To have your questions answered by the EAP please email: [PERS@na.amedd.army.mil](mailto:PERS@na.amedd.army.mil)



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3. Is it time for an errands makeover? Try to streamline how many errands you run; consider ordering more online and grouping purchases (so that you go to a store once a month instead of weekly). Delegate errands to other family members or outsource your errands (e.g. hire someone to mow the lawn).
4. Keep things simple and set boundaries. Learn to say no to prevent additional stress and anxiety.
5. Make self care a priority. This includes letting go of guilt, eating nutritious food, getting adequate amounts and good quality sleep, talking with your social supports and more.
6. Give yourself an attitude check. How we think about our life has a significant influence over how we feel and the choices we make throughout the day. Keep in mind that we control how we perceive everything that happens to us.
7. Exercise. Research shows that regular exercise improves our concentration and increases our energy and alertness.
8. Relax, Relax, Relax! For example, consider taking 10-20 minutes to do something for yourself on the way home from work (such as a stroll in the park, reading a book, listening to your favorite music, etc...). Also, try to build in time once a week for a hobby or other activity that you enjoy.

References:

Bird, J. (2003). *Work-Life Balance Defined – What it really means!* Retrieved June 1, 2011, from <http://www.worklifebalance.com/worklifebalancedefined.html>

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#### **Number 4- Strengthen His Sense of Self**

A positive sense of self usually equals a more confident, competent and “worthy feeling” person. These are important traits for a boy to have. Be sure to praise his efforts and not just his talents. Do not give praise that is exaggerated, like – “You’re the greatest basketball player in the league this year” or “You’re smarter than all the other boys in your class.” Make sure the praise is realistic. Your child will feel more proficient and better able to handle challenges when they are praised for *how they do a task* and *for completing it*. They need to hear “You worked hard” and “Good job giving that extra effort to get your project done”. Parents play a major role in setting the stage for self-esteem in their children. Refrain from excusing negative behavior by saying “Boys will be boys.” Boys have as much control over their behavior as girls.

#### **Number 5- Show Affection**

Lately, you may have wondered when your son stopped wanting hugs and kisses from you and how that happened? Once adolescence hits, children try to establish themselves as independent. Your young man is then trying to sort out how affection, emotions, and caring fit into his world. This is another place where your modeling of healthy affection is crucial. If you are trying to raise your son to be a caring and affectionate man, your son must be given healthy affection as a child. Additionally, he must have a secure attachment with you. Secure dependence, emotional accessibility, and healthy affection in a relationship between a parent and child builds a strong bond. You want your son to feel secure in being independent while growing and establishing his sense of self. It can also be helpful for young men to see or have a positive male who can model being comfortable with receiving and giving healthy affection. Remember, parent your son with your heart and an emotionally intelligent male will emerge after your hard work!

References:

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books, New York, NY.

Gottman, J. (1997). *Raising an emotionally intelligent child: The heart of parenting*. Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, New York, NY.

McCarthy, L. (June 2011). How to raise a good man: What moms can do to bring up a son with character. *Woman's Day*, 74(9), 30-37.

**Make an EAP Appointment:** Call 703-692-8917 to schedule an appointment that is convenient for you. The EAP is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 4:00pm.